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Twenty-third special session
Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole

Draft report of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole

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Review and appraisal of progress made in the implementation of the twelve critical areas of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action

Further actions and initiatives for overcoming obstacles to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action

Addendum

1. The Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole considered paragraphs 5 and 13 of the proposed outcome document of the twenty-third special session (A/S-23/2/Add.2 (Part II)) at its _____ meeting, on 9 June 2000.

2. At the same meeting, the Committee approved the following amendments and recommended the paragraphs, as amended, to the special session for adoption:

(a) Paragraph 5 was amended to read:

"*Obstacles*: Many factors have contributed to widening economic inequality between women and men, including income inequality, unemployment and deepening of poverty levels of the most vulnerable and marginalized groups. Debt burdens, excessive military spending, inconsistent with national security requirements, unilateral coercive measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations, armed conflict, foreign occupation, terrorism, low levels of official development assistance and the unfulfilled commitment to strive to fulfil the yet to be attained internationally agreed target of 0.7 per cent of the gross national product of developed countries for overall official development assistance and 0.1½ per cent to 0.2 per cent for the least developed countries, as well as the lack of efficient use of resources, among other factors, can constrain national efforts to combat poverty. In addition, gender inequalities and disparities in economic power-sharing, unequal distribution of

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unremunerated work between women and men, lack of technological and financial support for women's entrepeneurship, unequal access to, and control over, capital, particularly land and credit and access to labour markets, as well as harmful, traditional and customary practices, have constrained women's economic empowerment and exacerbated the feminization of poverty. Fundamental economic restructuring experienced by countries with economies in transition has led to lack of resources for poverty-eradication programmes aimed at empowerment of women";

(b) Paragraph 13 was amended to read:

"*Obstacles*: Peace is inextricably linked to equality between women and men and development. Armed and other types of conflicts, wars of aggression, foreign occupation, colonial or other alien domination, as well as terrorism, continue to cause serious obstacles to the advancement of women. The targeting of civilians, including women and children, the displacement of people, and the recruitment of child soldiers in violation of national or international law, by State and/or non-State actors, which occur in armed conflicts, have had a particularly adverse impact on gender equality and women's human rights.

"Armed conflict creates or exacerbates the high level of female-headed households, which in many cases are living in poverty.

"The underrepresentation, at all levels, of women in decision-making positions, such as special envoys or special representatives of the Secretary-General, in peacekeeping, peace-building, post-conflict reconciliation and reconstruction, as well as the lack of gender awareness in these areas, presents serious obstacles.

"There has been a failure to provide sufficient resources and to adequately distribute those resources, to address the needs of increasing numbers of refugees, who are mostly women and children, particularly to developing countries hosting large numbers of refugees. International assistance has not kept pace with the increasing number of refugees.

"The growing number of internally displaced persons and the provision of their needs, in particular women and children, continue to represent a double burden to the affected countries and their financial resources. Inadequate training of personnel dealing with the needs of women in situations of armed conflict or as refugees, such as a shortage of specific programmes that address skills training and healing of women from trauma, remains a problem.

"Excessive military expenditures, including global military expenditures, trade in arms and investment for arms production, taking into consideration national security requirements, direct the possible allocation of funds away from social and economic development, in particular for the advancement of women.

"In several countries, economic sanctions have had social and humanitarian impacts on the civilian population, in particular women and children.

"In some countries, the advancement of women is adversely affected by unilateral measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that create obstacles to trade relations among States, impede the full realization of social and economic development and hinder the well-being of the population in the affected countries, with particular consequences for women and children.

"In situations of armed conflict, there are continued violations of human rights of women, which are violations of fundamental principles of international human rights law and international humanitarian law. There has been an increase in all forms of violence against women, including sexual slavery, rape, systematic rape, sexual abuse and forced pregnancies in situations of armed conflict. Displacement compounded by loss of home and property, poverty, family disintegration and separation and other consequences of armed conflict are severely affecting the population, especially women and children. Girls are also abducted or recruited, in violation of international law, into situations of armed conflict, including, *inter alia*, as combatants, sexual slaves or providers of domestic services."